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## Interview with Joy Lyons (FA 1098)

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**Kentucky Folklife Program  
Interview Transcription**

**Project name:** Ranger Lore (LOCRP)

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**Interviewee:** Joy Lyons

**Interviewer/Recordist:** Brent Björkman

**Date:** 7/12/13

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**Context:**

**Technical Considerations:**

**Transcription prepared by:** Blake Briscoe

**Transcribing Conventions:**

Use of square brackets [ ] indicates a note from the transcriber.

Use of parentheses ( ) indicates a conversational aside.

Use of em dash — indicates an interruption of thought or conversation.

Use of ellipses ... indicates a discontinued thought.

Use of quotations “ ” indicates dialogue within conversation.

Use of italics indicates emphasis.

Use of underline indicates movie, magazine, newspaper, or book titles.

Names of interviewee and interviewer are abbreviated by first and last initial letters.

Time is recorded in time elapsed by the convention [hours:minutes:seconds].

**Note:** This partial transcription is as accurate and complete as possible. In any question of interpretation, the researcher is referred to the recording itself as the primary document representing this event.

**[time elapsed in hours:minutes:seconds]**

**[00:00:00]**

**[Track 1]**

**Brent Björkman:** Today is August 12<sup>th</sup>–July 12<sup>th</sup> 2013 and I am with Joy Lyons at her house. This is Brent Björkman with the Kentucky Folklife Program and we’re going to talk a little bit today about the Library of Congress Park Ranger Occupational Folk Culture project that I am about to start. It’s a fellowship—It’s going to be funded through a fellowship from the Library of Congress and I was thinking about what type of occupational group I was going to apply for and I thought you know what are some of the things in Kentucky that we would like to take a look at. Everything really pointed at taking a look at park rangers cause it was nearby; it was something that I didn’t think had been talked about too much. When I was trying to conceive of that I asked you Joy about what you thought of it and asked for your help in conceiving it and some of the elements that would be important to cover when we talked about working in the park. So maybe we could begin by talking a little bit about that process and some of the things you think are important.

**Joy Lyons:** Sure. I know that when you first approached me with that topic I was extremely excited about it. Especially, since I have been thinking lots of thoughts over the last year or two. We’ve got several very important anniversaries coming up within the National Park Service and at Mammoth Cave National Park where I have worked for more than 30 years. We’ve got the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service. One-hundred years in 2016. We’ve got two-hundred years of guiding cave tours at Mammoth Cave. Of course that pre park service days as well. Then we have the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mammoth Cave National Park. All of that comes in the year 2016. So, it’s a little serendipitous that you came up with this idea right before we really got into discussing plans for these anniversaries at Mammoth Cave at the National Park. So, when you mentioned it I thought park rangers yes definitely. I am biased. I’ve been one for a long time, but I also know that there are so many people out in the United States and other countries who don’t understand the role that national park rangers *play* and how that function can change from location to location from region to region and even within a park depending on what district you might be in a national park. Mammoth Cave is one of four national park service sites in the state of Kentucky. That’s actually quite a few for a state that’s pretty much—I’ll say a medium sized state. There are other states that have many more and others that have fewer. So yeah, I was really excited to have the whole process aimed toward National Park, National Park rangers and I kind of liked it that it would maybe happen before I decided to retire which will be soon.

[00:03:30]

BB: What are the other parks? You mentioned when we were first talking. Mammoth Cave.

JL: Mammoth Cave National Park. There’s Cumberland Gap National Historic Site. Big South Fork which is a National Recreation Area. It’s actually Big South Fork National Scenic River I think, and then Abraham Lincoln’s birthplace up in Hodgenville. So, those four; two pretty much in this part of the state and the other two are in the eastern part of the state, and definitely part of what was called the eastern parks movement. All four really were.

[00:04:11]

BB: That means they were created at the same time or?

JL: Well, they all came to—roughly close to each other. I would have to look this up, but I’d have

to look this up. I think though that Abraham Lincoln's birthplace was the first one of the four. I wouldn't want to swear to that but I think it was the first of the four to be accepted by congress. Yeah.

[00:04:40]

BB: You know coming here to study folklore and being a folklorist in the state you've always been like a very interesting friend because I was introduced to you as—I guess I was introduced to you in the park context but even before then I was (unintelligible) sort of she's a folklorist as well. So, it's always been...to see how you've...the conversations I've had with you about how folklore and ethnography, and just in your interpretive—the way that you interpret—this may be somewhat like a park service person, maybe not, but I've always like looked to you like what an implacable kind of way to use all of the skills that you have as a folklorist—that you see things like a folklorist. Before we maybe talk about the rangering thing can I talk to you a little about how you went into the folk studies program? Was it at the same time—were you doing seasonal work at the park and then you were? What was your aha moment to be a folklorist?

JL: My aha moment to be—wow. It was actually as an undergraduate. My first folklore class was urban folklore with Cam Collins at Western. It was just an eclectic group of people in the class and I'm not sure how to describe Camilla Collins, but I'll say that she grabbed my attention really quickly in class. She wound up being a mentor to me and I met a young lady named Teresa or Terry Darika who was in the master's program. She was in that urban folklore class with me and we all hit it off. Myself and Terry and a guy named Danny Flex, and another fella named Michael Hendrix. We all became really good friends in that class and started socializing. Then we signed up for the next class the next semester. I really fell in love with the topic because I wasn't sure if I wanted to major or minor in English or History and I found that the folk studies classes that I was taking were hitting on both, but in a more cultural way that I espoused. I like the interworking's of how does a group interact with each other, how do they share things with each other, what's important, how they pass on traditions. So, I really like history, but it wasn't so much the political history as it was the communal history and what made families tick, what made larger groups of families tick, and how do they all work together to create a sense of place. I knew in my gut what I was interested in. I knew it intuitively. I didn't know what to call it. Then when I got there into the class it was very quick. I realized quickly that I had accidentally fallen into just what I was looking for by taking that class. I mean, I found myself learning about ballads and of course moonshine. I mean, every genre of things that I've ever been interested in was all of a sudden coming up in class. There are things that you know you want to learn more about, but you do the traditionally you tended to learn those things from individuals. You know, how to do something, how to make something, how to build I don't know a dog house. Whatever, but I found out that that was the discipline that grabbed me. I continued to take the English class and the American history classes and I wound up actually majoring in English with a double minor in history and folk studies and it wasn't until years later that I went back and took some masters classes. That was after I was married and had the girls. I had children. It was something that I had put on the backburner because my career started and I decided, you know, it's time to get back into that academic realm of folk studies because I was seeing ways I could use it at work and ways I could share it with other people on my staff. By then I was already a supervisor. I was supervising other people and trying to give them those investigative skills and the research skills. So, I decided that it was time for me to go back and pick up a few more classes.

[00:10:05]

BB: How many years was it after you graduated, you and David were together and had the girls, and then what was the period of time between undergrad and your graduate?

JL: Eleven years—ten or eleven years later. I had both the girls already. I was in my early thirties when I went back. I have to say, I knew at the time that I was going to stick with the National Park Service and I did not go intending not to finish the degree but I wound up deciding not to because it just got to the point where I was so busy at work and had risen up the ladder at work and had the kids. I wound up saying, you know, I've already got my career, I'm already doing well, I don't need the master's degree for money—to make more money, I'm making what I'm making and that's all it's gonna be. So, I laid off. I stopped the class work at that time. I did maintain friendships and working relationships with pretty much everybody up in the department and Lynwood Montel. He was actually...

[00:11:24]

BB: What was your connection with Lynwood?

JL: Well, when I was at Western Lynwood was the department head. The folk studies department head. His son Brad and I both were at Western at the same time attending classes. I also worked for the department at that time. Charles Guthry, who was an English professor at Western. Charley Guthry had been the editor of the Kentucky folklore record. My first year at Western, I was his student assistant so I helped him with the Kentucky folklore record. Actually, the fact that that little booklet—the professional booklet existed is what caused me to look in the catalog and select a folk studies class, because I had been talking to Dr. Guthry. He was editing as a member of the English department and I decided I would like to see what that was all about. At that time he was really having to scrape to get people to write articles, to submit music or whatever for review—anything for review actually. I did all of his correspondence and mail outs and bulk mailings and all that sort of thing. That was part of what intrigued me to get over to the building next door and take classes up in Gordon Wilson. I hated that staircase by the way. That back staircase. After coming up that hill it was adding insult to injury in the summer time. Oh, you walk all the way up that hill and then you had those glassed in windows with heat just reflecting off of everything. I cussed those stairs many a day. Definitely cussed those stairs. Did you know Charles Guthry?

[00:13:28]

BB: I did not.

JL: Yeah, he was married to Vera Guthry who was—I think she was department—but she was—she was the department head in the library science. They lived on normal drive about where the brand new building is right now.

BB: The Gary Randsell building?

JL: Yeah, the Gary Randsell building. That's exactly where their house used to sit. Yeah, it was a nice house. I lived there with them for about a year. They were good people.

[00:14:02]

BB: So, when you were an undergrad had your seasonal or employment started with the park service? Did you grow up here?

JL: No, I grew up in Owensboro north of here about 100 miles. So I was a flat lander up on the Ohio River. I didn't actually start working for the park service...I said a few minutes ago that Terry Durika and I became—we became roommates and we actually lived over at the—with the Guthries at their house. Had a bedroom upstairs that they rented to us and Terry came home one day in 78—end of 1978 with a couple of applications. She said, "I'm applying for a summer position with the Park Service". She said, "I've got an extra application you want it"? I remember sitting there thinking "well where is the closest national park to here"? She said with total disdain, "Mammoth Cave, of course." I was like, "oh yeah, I went to Mammoth Cave in the seventh grade when we had a field trip from Davis County". So, I said, "Sure I'll fill it out". Those applications were horrendous. Those were the days of multiple pages very similar to census bureau forms where you had the little bubbles you have to fill in. So you had to—everything was—or taking your GED. Remember those test pages where you had those little bubbles you had to ink it in completely or whatever. Well that's what we had to fill out. Pages and pages where you had to rate yourself on everything from ability to use a chainsaw to swimming fifty yards to speaking in front of a group of one-hundred people. So you had this really widespread listing of every possible task you could think to do for the park service and then some. You had to go through and rate yourself as either being completely a moron with it on up to being able to teach somebody how to do it, how to instruct. So, of course I was pretty honest on my—but I really was. I tried not to make myself look like a moron too much, but a lot of it I'd never done before. Then surprisingly quite a bit of it I had. One of the ones that I had done I dealt with money a good deal with my previous work. So, I wound up getting a job offer from Mammoth Cave National Park to work in the ticket office selling tickets for cave tours my first summer. Terry did not get an offer at all which did not set well, because she of course had more education. She was working with her master's degree—or was finishing her master's degree and didn't get a job offer but I did. So, 1979 that was the year that I went to work for the park service *in the uniform selling tickets at the mission sixty-six visitor center* that we had for fifty years. That's where it all started for me, as a seasonal GS3, now a GS3 ticket seller. It was a great summer. Loved it! It was one of the best summers—probably the best summer of my life actually.

BB: Why's that?

JL: Because of the friendships I made and the connections I made to Kentucky itself. To my own home state, the fact that I became an adult realizing that the place where I came from was special and was an important place in the country. So, I was just really alive that summer. Made really really—some of my friendships were—some of them still last today. Fell in love with the cave, met my husband that summer. David was working at Mammoth Cave that summer as a guide and we carpooled. Actually there was about ten of us that carpooled from Bowling Green that summer and that's the year I fell in love with him.

[00:19:06]

BB: I was going to ask you. What characters and personalities did you meet that summer?  
David's one...

JL: I met David. I met obviously the people who hired me. Louis Hutliff, who is still kickin today. He's been retired for about twenty years, but Louis lives here in Park City. I met Rachel Wilson who was one of the first women ever to work at Mammoth Cave in the Park Ranger series, and oh golly so many people! There were about—I think there were about thirty new seasonals that summer and we all went through a week of training together. So, I met people like Pam Underwood and Denise Bowls, or Denise Bower excuse me, Kenny Eso, Dan Skeen, and Ray Henderson, whose nickname was Rock Henderson. He was a Western Kentucky University football player back in the day. (Phone Rings) So there were quite a few people actually that remain my friends today, pretty much all of them. With Facebook I reconnected with to most of them and that's been great. We have an annual guide's picnic that sometimes the old guides will come too and their always invited to it and welcome there, but we also every five years have a guide reunion, so a bigger guide's reunion in the fall and folks will come back from like the early sixties, the early fifties. Yeah, it's amazing the camaraderie that exists within the guide force at Mammoth Cave, which of course are park rangers. They continue even across the decades. It's like once a Mammoth Cave guide always a Mammoth Cave guide.

[00:21:20]

BB: So it's like a small town high school reunion. You know...

JL: It is!

BB: How intimate they are.

JL: Very much so. All the same stories get told over and over again. And you know they're going to tell the story. You know might as well not even ask them not to tell the story. It's going to come out. Everybody has their special story about a special person and do you remember when. Everyone knows the story but a specific person has to tell that story cause that's their story to tell. All that goes on as well with reunions and then just acknowledging—it's kind of our own backslapping sort of a party. It's been going on for two-hundred years you know and one-hundred twenty-five years of it was before it was even a national park of guiding and that was all men. Matter of fact it was mostly men on up to the nineteen sixties I think. So you have that kind of brotherhood that was then infiltrated by women in the nineteen sixties and seventies. By the time I came on the picture in 1979 the guys had pretty much accepted the fact that women were there, but it was still a testing ground. I was actually pretty quiet, subdued and didn't cuss at all when I started working there. I didn't stay that way cause I found myself compelled to prove that I could stick with them in all things right or wrong. I did it and so it worked out ok for me though.

[23:15]

BB: So these early cohorts you gave a list of the people and working during the day and then you would be...at night would you drive back to Bowling Green and do social things together? It became a...

JL: Yes it became a very close knit group and what's really kinda funny about is we would sometimes drive all the way back to Bowling Green after work, change clothes real quick, turn around and drive all the back to the park for a party at *Seasonals*. That's what it's called *Seasonals* with a capital S because there are three buildings over there that are apartment buildings. Each of the three buildings has four apartments in it and that's were seasonal staff would stay. You had two people to each apartment. So basically eight people in each building and that was party central for the summer. So you got your usual talkings too about beer bottles left out on the stoops and all that good stuff. They had big parties over there, really big parties, drunken brawls actually sometimes. Then we would get talked too because quiet hours in the park are at ten O'clock and people at the camp ground could actually hear us at Seasonals if we weren't quiet so we had to be really cautious about that sort of thing.

BB: Big bonfires too then or...

JL: At that point no we didn't. We didn't have anything over there in the seventies and early eighties. We do now at Seasonals. They've got were they have a campfire over there now, and they'll gather around the fire and talk about their day—crazy things that happened on tours and crazy things definitely happen on tours. They'll share stories with each other about visitors and just funny things that each other says cause sometimes people will just do something silly or funny at work and they sit around and share it at night around the campfire. So then everybody on the frontline staff knows everything that goes on but the supervisors don't really know much of anything that goes on because they're not sitting there around the campfire at night with the other folks too much.

[00:25:40]

BB: The supervisors know to keep a way or they are never really invited?

JL: Well, it's not that we were not invited. We are actually pretty much always invited it's just that well in the past there were a few supervisors who did go over and kinda join in the fun. Depending on what the activity was. You know like if you have a potluck meal yeah that's kind of a fun thing to do. You come over, you eat, talk a while, then you leave and then you let them have their time afterwards, because my thought as a supervisor, and having been in the front line like I was for so long; I know that they need their space, they need the time to vent sometimes. You know, just to say out loud, this is what happened, do ya'll think this was right? Do you think that she should really make me do this? Do you think it really matter if I have my hat on walking back and forth between my car and the visitor center? Is it really that big a deal? I mean, it's that kind of stuff and it's the sort of thing that they need to have, an opportunity to get off their chest. They do it with each other and plus some of them have their roles that they play within conversations like that. I'll say some of the older seasonals who are retirees and who are role models you know gives them the opportunity to step in and maybe explain things to them and they do. It's one thing that works for us rather than—I don't have to be that heavy all the time. Sometimes all I have to do is tell them it would be a better choice for them to change their behavior and I'd appreciate it, and then ask someone else to explain to them why so that they don't feel like they are getting undue attention from me. I also tend to—I'm one of those that corrects behavior kind of slyly. It tend to introduce things in a joking manner at first and then I'll turn to them and say I'm joking around this time, but next time you're going to be going home and change your uniform shirt, you know, no wrinkles. We joke and we tease each other and we



are all pretty laid back, but they've learned to tell when I'm serious about something. I learned to tell when my supervisors were serious about something. You learn the difference like how far to push it. We do have a really strong family atmosphere, *very strong family atmosphere*. It comes into play at the park just as it comes into play within someone's nuclear family. We each have taken on a roll within the group. You know when to be serious and you know when you can just kind of goof around with something. It's a challenge supervising creative people and *they are very creative people*.

[00:29:18]

BB: So, you kind of explained your supervisor style. Do you have a certain person that you're kind of basing that? Was there a supervisor in your past? Was it an amalgamation of maybe like several different people you worked with or it's an organic thing? Is there somebody that you can tell me about that was, like yeah that's where I got that kind of style from? Was there an instance where you had a wrinkle in your uniform and you know what I mean?

JL: Actually no, I would say that I am kind of a combination of different people, but not just supervisors though, probably family members as well like my own real family members. As far as my style I think that I tend to give what I'm comfortable taking myself and I'm more of a direct person. I get pretty direct. I'm not real subtle about certain things. I don't want to hurt people's feelings, but I'm also not a push over. I take pride, I think in the fact that I've always been good at reading people and knowing who's solid and who isn't quite ready for prime time. That has taught me that you can't treat everyone the same. You have to, at least I had to take the time and the trouble to get to know each of them as an individual and interact with each of them in a way that works for that person. It takes time to do that. I know that I have a reputation at the park for being that way; for taking time with the staff and not just doing across the board rules and regs just to say...I've had supervisors myself who were like that and they treated everyone the same. If they gave one person a day off then they felt that they would have to give everyone a day off, and so no one got a day off. You know a requested day off. If they made an allowance for special treatment then no one got special treatment. I don't look at it that way. I look at it as building a team of people each of whom has their own skills and talents and each of them has their own niche within our team. In doing that they all have a roll to be proud of because they know that they bring a strength to our bunch of people that others don't bring. So, I tend to take those individuals and their skills and give them opportunities to beef those things up. Then I make it a point of using them, and *I do mean using them*, but of allowing them and using them in special ways on the job. So if I have certain people who are type A personalities for instance and there are a lot of them. You know if they were all vying to be top notch interpreter, top notch cave guide and they wanted to be seen as the best cave guide I would have hell to work with. If that's all they could strive toward they would all be wanting the same opportunities. They would all be wanting to go to the same courses. They would all be wanting to get the same training were as if I got them all doing, you know, like for instance I don't think everyone on my staff has to be god's gift to interpretation. I want them to all be good, I want them to all be comfortable with it, but I want each one of them to have their special place on our staff where they fill a roll that has to be done, where they can shine and they can be known as that go to person. So, you know you asked me about my past supervisors. I learned that from them that a team is varied and I learned it not because of how they did, but because of how they didn't do it. There wasn't a lot of creativity or thought given to what staff members were going to be allowed to do, instructed to do or just groomed for. People talk about the government that people get groomed and their preselected and

that's not necessarily true. You don't have to be a genius to hone in on what people's strengths are. When you see them as a supervisor, at least I felt like that was my job as their supervisor to help them first of all recognize their own strengths and second of all see if they were interested in pursuing those in their own special way and then finding opportunities for them to do that and then celebrating that with when I got a chance. For instance, the other day Dave Spence who is one of the permanent guides on staff—Dave can put anything together. He's so mechanical and he's good with his hands. He's the guy that can think things through, fix anything and you know he's a cave guide. Is that important for me? Yes, because we have tools of the trade. Dave is one of those people who can fix any lantern you put in front of him. We found that out. He was comfortable with lanterns; lighting them, taking them apart, putting them back together, telling me when we need to buy more, ordering new parts and what have you. I always have called him my lantern man for several years now. The other day on eBay, no it was etsy online, I saw a couple of old Avon decanters. Small ones, but one was a kerosene lantern like a Deets lantern and the other one was a Coleman lantern. They were just empty Avon men's cologne bottles, but they were older they were vintage and I saw them on there and I ordered them. Dave Spence came by to see me the other day and gave them to him. I said, "I've had these for you for a while. I was going to bring them to work to you, but here I thought I wanted to get these for my lantern man just to remind you that I appreciate what you do". It tickled him. I mean it was just nothing big it was just something that let him know I was thinking about him and that I appreciate the work that he does at the park. There are a lot of stories about the staff like that. People that have their own strengths and places within the staff that we can take advantage of and build a really strong unit, a strong cadre of employees who don't feel threatened by each other but depend on each to make it work.

[00:38:05]

BB: So other than Dave do you have other examples of people with strengths or who you celebrate?

JL: Oh yeah. Oh gosh! Chuck Decroy. Chuck is—he's my I'll say A/V guru. He deals with all kinds of things when it comes to copying old music or you know like the old cassette tapes. Hard to believe I'm saying old cassette tapes, but remember the little cassette tapes were we would record each other back in the day. We have a lot of things like that in our collection. In our library at work. So Chuck takes old interviews and old documentaries and transfers them to DVD for me and things of that nature. He saved a lot of those by doing that for us. VHS I mean all the old formats. What's kind of fun, is he takes—we've got some old interviews that were done. The CCC boys for instance, people who worked in the CCC at Mammoth Cave. Kelly Lowy Malloy did those back in the eighties I think it was. We've had all of those copied to DVD—well to CD because they were on cassette, but what's also fun about is Chuck, without being asked, will take them and make extra copies and distribute them to family members of those fellas, people who are still living or their descendants and made sure they have copies of them. [takes a drink] Sorry, I have to take a drink here.

[00:40:00]

BB: Without them having to come forward and ask for them?

JL: Right. They don't come forward and ask for them. Mostly because they don't even know they exist. So, you may have someone like Mary Jo Veezat who lives in Cave City. Her father was Joe Caleeza and he was actually the superintendent at Mammoth Cave many years ago. She didn't realize we had a interview tape with Joe, and Chuck gave her one as a gift, which her father's been gone a long time. So, it meant a tremendous amount to Mary Jo to get that and hear her dad's voice. That was true for many other people as well. To be able to hear your grandfather's voice for the first time and we're still talking the men. They were the Civilian Conservation Corps. We get a lot of satisfaction in doing things like that for our neighbors and you know just the park's constituents. I'm sure we will continue to do that kind of thing over there. It's important to all the guide staff, especially the park ranger to reach out to the descendants of the families who lived at Mammoth Cave back before the park service came along and also to reach out to descendants of the park service employees. Its 2013, it's not 1945 anymore. Time has passed and the National Park Service has been here for a long time. I don't think it's going to go anywhere and we need the trust and love of the people in the area. I think we have it now more than we've ever had it before. The trust...

[00:42:00]

BB: How has that changed since you've come on the...Can you speak to that a little bit? I mean that will be a part of the story I want to get especially about this particular location. When did it expand into what it...taking over extra land and is that a history that I can ask you about?

JL: Well you—sure you can ask me about it. You can ask me about it. I mean ill answer. You know some things I have not had much experience with because that wasn't my role at the park. I wasn't one of the people who helped trade property or bring land into the park service, but my role as a park ranger was to make overtures we'll say to the locals and to build relationships and to do that through interpretation and through my own behavior. You know, you want to treat people the way you want to be treated at least that's what I think. So, when I started in 79—at that time none of the National Parks were doing a lot of reaching outside of their park boundaries. I think science helped us to do that because we started learning more about, for instance in this area, karst topography with the limestone caves and what we could learn from the cave system here and extrapolate from here to other karst regions in the United States and other countries. So, I think that we started making overtures nationally through like UNESCO, which of course, got a little political, well was very political, but when you talk about world heritage sites and the fact that Mammoth Cave National Park was selected as a world heritage site, and the fact that Mammoth Cave National Park became a man in the biosphere site, which gave us national and world status as basically a scientific laboratory that the world can learn from. Once that started happening we started realizing that we weren't encapsulated; that we actually are interconnected outside the boundaries. Then we wound up needing to educate the public about those interconnections and how what they did outside of the parks impacted inside the parks, but also what we did inside the park could impact outside the park. We started making friends. We started being nice to each other going to meetings and public meetings and not hiding behind I guess the green and grey uniform as someone in the area thought we did and actually creating a dialogue. That's what was happening in the 80's and continued to happen through the 90's. As superintendents came and went at the park you know you see different ideologies and different ways of approaching the public and the local communities. Some did better than others. Some superintendents—you know there's always a rumor that each superintendent comes with some marching orders that their given some audio tape that self-destructs or something before they

actually hit the park boundary. I don't think that that's quite true, but they have all been very different in their demeanor and how they approach local constituencies and the staff for that matter how they do that. We right now have our first female superintendent ever. Sarah Craighead just came in last November and that's a new one for us. It's taken a while but I've seen quite a few superintendents and I've seen some strong superintendents. I've seen a few that were not so strong. What's interesting though is I've always watched the team of people, the leadership team at Mammoth Cave pull together regardless of who the superintendent was because they and their staffs knew what needed to be done and how it needed to be done and how soon it needed to be done. So we would find ways to balance the happiness of the superintendent against or with our ability to keep the staff and locals satisfied. I'll put it that way. Superintendents are powerful people within our realm so you wanna keep them happy, but we also have our own knowledge that we've learned over the years of what works with especially local communities and you don't want to bury—you don't want to lose ground. You don't want to lose ground from going from a strong superintendent to one that's maybe not as strong in those areas and wind up having to make up ten years later. You want to keep that momentum going even if it means that you may or may not be staying on the boss' good side.

[00:47:50]

BB: Well, you've seen a pretty much better mentor and projector that's...

JL: Oh yeah I have. I've seen our relationship with all kinds of people improve over the years and we don't want to lose that we want to keep that going. For instance, now there are different genres even. It's not just that you encounter constituents face to face on tours or that you see them at meetings or at meetings at the park. Now you have groups of people who are meeting on the internet. I mean now we're using the internet to share information with each other, myfamily.com, there's several sites that deal with Mammoth Cave descendants and Barren County and Edmonson County. There's a Mammoth Cave guide site and people become members on there and they share their thoughts about anything and everything. They post photographs, they share information and they learn so much about each other and we have honed friendships online, and then I think that I've by my presence on some of those sites I think that I've raised the trust level of a lot of folks out there between local families and decisions that are being made at the park. So all you have to do is be honest with people. Tell them the truth. Tell them how you came to a decision, why you came to a decision and welcome their feedback. That's a lot of what we're doing these days. A lot of our decisions are being put up for public response. Sometimes they jump on the bandwagon and sometimes they don't. We're a lot more, I guess you could say we're a lot more open about how we do things than we used to be so that's changed through all the superintendents, and when we make a mistake we own up to it. That never would have happened four years ago. You know, we look back and we know the park service made some major screw ups over the years and we're sorry for them. I could sit here and say, "It wasn't me, I didn't do it", but I still represents the agency that did do it. Even though people were thinking differently back then I still feel a responsibility for their actions because I'm still a part of that group. I'm proud to be in the National Park Service

[00:50:47]

BB: I think you're going back to your honesty is the best policy isn't it?

JL: Yeah it is. I mean, why not? Honesty is a lot easier to cover your tracks when you're honest. Just tell the truth. You don't have to worry about it so much.

[00:51:04]

BB: So at the reunions that you have sometimes different people attend [?] reunions. Then there's always people that you know are going to tell that story or this story and that sort of thing. What's the story that Joy Lyons tells at these kinds of things? What do people say? Here it comes, or...

JL: Oh, the story that I tell?

BB: Yeah.

JL: That people [Thinking] *The story* that people want me to tell is usually one about—is one that happened in the cave, huh a long time ago. It happened in the winter of [recalling] the mid 1980's. Actually ok, it was like the late 1980's. I was in the cave with a historic tour group and it didn't trail, and by that I mean that it didn't have enough people on it for a second ranger to go with me. So, that was a good thing because it wasn't witnessed. When we got into the cave—when we got into the rotunda, which is where the salt peter works are at the boxes, and then we'd go on down to the church, which at that point, some people called it the Methodist church, at that point is where we would typically do cave lighting demonstration. We would turn the lights out, light a lantern, an old replica of a grease lantern and we'd throw torches, which we hadn't done since 1991. Actually, I take that back, we stopped throwing torches December 31<sup>st</sup> 1990. That was the last day that anyone threw a torch in Mammoth Cave. It was a fella named David Alexander who threw the last torch in Mammoth Cave. But um...

BB: And that means that you light a...

JL: Yeah. Well what we would do is we had a long stick usually made out of hickory and it's about three feet long. At the tip of it is, if you can picture a nail with no head to it sort of jammed into the end of it. It was a little bit like a pick up stick that you pick up trash with a poke point on the end of it. They were always handmade by the local guides. They would always make them themselves (phone rings). I was at the church getting ready to make my lighting demonstration and I leaned over in the dirt—I leaned over to pick up a couple of torches. Well, I had the torch stick in my hand and when I leaned over—these torches were made out of rag material that we used to get from Union Und—well from Fruit of a Loom in Bowling Green. All those scrap t-shirts, well we would take them and cut them into one inch strips and twist them around like a twist of chewing tobacco and you'd wrap the end of it, tie it off and it would look like—well to be honest with you it looked like a tampon, kind of just like a plug of chewing tobacco. We would soak those in some kind of fuel—kerosene in our days, and each of us was limited to two torches that we would stand in the church and throw up high into the darker recesses of the room, maybe towards a ledge like the 'rat's ledge' or the 'eagle's nest'. So these torch shots had special names because, they got names because the guides competed with each other for who could hit which torch shot and they were basically rated by difficulty. It was something that the guides did for their own pleasure and to outdo each other. So, I got in there that day and I leaned over, was talking to the visitors—I had about twenty people with me and as I leaned over I leaned down to pick up the torch stick and somehow or other when I leaned with the torch stick and grabbed the

torch I hooked the nail on the torch stick through the buckle, actually, the underwire on my bra. I had somehow it stuck threw the front of my shirt and into a hole I had on my bra where the underwire was. So, when I did that and I put the torch on I went to raise up and I couldn't. I was literally like a ninety degree angle to the floor jerking really hard trying to stand up not realizing that the torch stick was stuck through my shirt and into the underwire of my bra, and I had this nasty kerosene torch stuck to me. So, finally I got that jerked free, stood up, put the torch back on the torch stick and threw it. Luckily it hadn't been lit yet. That would have been pretty bad. It would have been rough. So anyway, one of the visitors on the tour came up to me as we were walking out of the church on the trail and she said, "did you get that all figured out ok?". I didn't realize that they had all see what I had done that I was stuck with the torch stick. You kinda had to be there, but everybody on staff just thought that was hilarious because the lady who came out of the cave decided that she would tell somebody about it. So, I had to describe all that and I had to go change my shirt cause I had kerosene all over the front—actually, I had to get rid of the shirt cause just wouldn't come clean. So, that was my big torch stick story. That's what everybody always wanted me to tell was that one, that I tried to light myself up one day on a non-trailing historic tour with underwire in a bra.

[00:57:28]

BB: I was going to ask you. Wouldn't you have just not told anybody, but...

JL: *I didn't*

BB: the visitor

JL: I wasn't gonna tell nobody no not at all. Then there's just lots of funny things that happens to people on tours. The first time David ever kissed me was in the cave.

BB: Tell me about that.

JL: It was actually the summer that I was working in the ticket office and the first summer—no actually it was in the fall. It was in October cause I was kept on until the fall to work on weekends. We were having a slow day and I asked if I could go on a historic tour just to get back in the cave and kinda see what was going on as part of my training cause as ticket sellers you didn't get in the cave as much as the guides obviously. The tour that I wanted to go on happened to be the one with David Lyons on it of course. That was the one that was the handiest for me to go on. The time worked and actually I just wanted to go because David was gonna be there. He was trailing the tour and a fella named Red Langley was guiding it, and at the church, the same spot where we do the lighting demonstration, I was walking in the back of the tour with David actually and we got up to the light switch where he would turn the lights out so that Red could then light his lantern up front and start his lighting demonstration. Red always left the lights out for a little while, while he talked to people in the dark, and visitors liked that. They liked to see the total darkness. I remember David hit the switch when Red asked him too and we're standing there really close to each other and I sort of sent my elbow over to the left and it hit his arm and he said I can't find you. I remember we both had our flat hats on and he leaned over and kissed me at the light switch at the Methodist church in Mammoth Cave October 1979. That was the first kiss ever. Yep, and then we walked out the rest of the way behind the tour group all the way out of the cave. [giggles] It was sweet.

[00:59:52]

[End of track 1]

[00:00:00]

[Track 2]

BB: That's very sweet.

JL: I was a lot thinner back then. I remember we were coming up the tower on the historic tour on that trip and he was walking behind me and telling me that he was calling it the amen corner because I was up in front of him going up the steps. He said, I think I like this amen corner back here pretty well. Yeah, I was a lot thinner back then.

BB: So do a lot of people—one of the things we talked about in the stories of being in well any park—this park because it's your experience this park—is um relationships that are created and marriages resolved and long term relationships resulted and what's that like for your life, your working career and your life in general.

JL: Oh yeah. Well obviously I mean David and I met at Mammoth Cave and we married. I think partly it's because shared interests. You know, you go to work in a national park because you do tend to have similar ideologies, similar value systems and often similar backgrounds as far as education goes. So, that happened with us and oh golly I could name all kinds of people who've gotten married at—or becoming couples at Mammoth Cave National Park just about the same time we did. There was Rich Caldwell and his wife Amy, Amy Gates. They met each other at Mammoth Cave in 1980. Vicky Carson, Vicky Thompson and Bobby Carson, Gib Backland and Connie Hudson, Brad McDougal and Patty Rochester got married, and *Golly*, so many since then too. Sharon Gantsy and Joe Gantsy, Gary Tally and his wife Martha. There's just dozens of people who either met when they were working for the National Park Service or one was working for the park service and the other was working for National Parks Concessions, it's the hotel, which is not the same as the park service, but concessional over there. A number of them recently even. So, it's every decade there have been several weddings come about because they met at Mammoth Cave. Maria Scott and Brett Powell, I mean just a lot. Brett Painter sorry, I said Brett Powell. Brett Painter and Maria Scott were recent ones. Lots, lots of them. It's not just at this park, I mean that's true at lots of national parks and then you have the challenge of both working for the National Park Service needing to be employed and having a dual career situation. The park service, there for a while, was really big on promoting dual careers in the national parks. I don't think it's quite so much so now and that's largely because we've just lost so many positions across the nations in the parks themselves. Our staffs are at a minimal now. A lot of the positions that have been vacated or people have retired or people moved on to another park they've just not been filled so they're [?] vacant.

[00:03:51]

BB: How about the two of you? When you, you know, started your relationship and got married. Was it in due time for this promotion of dual people? Did you have a...can you tell me what positions you had at the time and how did they morph into what they morphed into?

JL: Sure. I started out as I said a seasonal position. David started out as a seasonal as well. He's a veteran of the Vietnam War, and David was given a permanent—he was awarded I guess a permanent position in the fall of 79. It was a GS3 split position which meant that he was a park ranger split between interpretation and law enforcement and resources management. At that time in the late 70's all of our resources management, our science was done by the ranger division. So the law enforcement rangers also took care of studies, cave protection, all of that sort of thing. Truthfully, there wasn't a lot of it going on. We really at that point, by the late 70's Mammoth Cave had not gotten into what I would consider the science of national parks, and then by the 80's it started moving that way.

[00:05:14]

BB: What do you mean the science of the parks?

JL: Well, by that I mean actually beginning to study specific types of animals, mammals, plants, aquatic life, cave entrances, archaeology. There was not much documentation and ongoing research going on at the park at all. It had been being done almost completely by outside groups like the Cave Research Foundation, CRF or the National Speleological Society, NSS or by colleges, local colleges for instance. One that comes to mind, it wasn't science so much, but Gordon Wilson at Western Kentucky University, you know, he came to Mammoth Cave and his studies had to do with folk studies, with folklore.

[00:06:15]

BB: So what did he do? Did he interview the local cultural groups?

JL: Right. He was interviewing the local people who had their traditions, their various traditions in folkways, food ways, folk medicine, and all sorts of things like that. He was interviewing we'll say, what I would consider first generation people off the park and the last generation on the park. So, he was dealing with change you know where people were coming—being—I'll say just being forced out of the park—out of the park land where they were having to move to other areas. He was seeing that there was a need to try to save part of their culture because it was being dismantled in front of their own eyes basically. So, he was doing that kind of research. Probably until the 1960's no one was doing much real original research, by that I mean academic research related to anything on Mammoth Cave. There were people who were interested and they would write letters of inquiry wanting to find out if the park had information on Floyd Collins or some other Mammoth Cave topic, but no one was really doing what I would consider cutting edge research, not natural history, not cultural history really.

[00:07:57]

BB: So the rangers at that time were they just maintaining the status [?]? Making it a safe place for visitors?

JL: Exactly. The park rangers were doing law enforcement, they were writing tickets, they were making sure—they were dealing with poaching. They were dealing with lingering habits from people who had grown up hunting here in this area, and were still wanting to hunt. They were talking with people who were still wanting to dig seng, you know, dig ginseng, and they were



dealing with people who were frog gigging, taking trees down in the park or whatever. They were still dealing with just the basics of law enforcement and making sure people didn't break into caves and scar anything or vandalize or write graffiti. They were doing all those sorts of basic law enforcement tasks and working accidents and road kills, accidental deer hits and that sort of thing. The guides were guiding. I mean, you were a cave guide, a law enforcement officer or a naturalist back then. The naturalists were the ones who led surface hikes and they didn't necessarily give cave tours. As a matter of fact, they saw themselves as being different. The naturalists were surface people; the cave guides were underground. They learned the repertoire from each other. The naturalists taught each other about the trees, the plants, the mints, the flowers, the wildlife and the guides shared information with each other about the cave tour routes, what looked like a cat on the wall, what looked like a witch on the wall, here's how you throw a torch and here's how you make a torch. That's how they shared their information with each other. You learned your tour by listening to other people's tours and you took it for granted that everything they were saying was accurate, was correct and was true. You gave people a good time. The more they laughed, the better a time they had, the more they enjoyed the cave. They were showmen and the guides all the way through 19<sup>th</sup> century and in through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were that. They were showmen and did learn some things of a scientific nature. They didn't want to lie to people but they didn't always know the true story of how things formed or how the cave got to be the way it was, but they often felt that they were telling the truth. They felt that they had it right and sometimes they did. When I started working there sometimes it was a far cry from the truth what I was hearing on tours.

[00:11:17]

BB: So in your early career in the mid 80's could we call it like a professionalization or an academicization?

JL: Well, when I started working there we had just begun a few years before that to get more college graduated people on staff. There were a number of folks who were coming to work who were retirees from teaching and of course they were also college graduates. Then students started to come in for work as part of the seasonal way of doing things at that time.

[00:12:02]

BB: Was there more money?

JL: Actually yeah. That year in 79 they did get more money because I'm not sure why, and I wasn't in a position to know at that time, but it was primarily because of the year before and the couple years before that we had had higher visitation. They were having trouble handling all the people coming to the park. Tour limits were a lot higher then too. So, they were taking more than two-hundred people at a time on cave tours. Yeah, like two-hundred forty people at once to go into the cave.

[00:12:42]

BB: What is it now?

JL: Now on the historic tour its one-hundred twenty, which is still a lot of people but it's much

more manageable than have two-forty or even higher. I once accidentally had a tour that was sold twice, a historic tour. It had three-hundred fifty-seven people on it. Basically we were able to stop like once in the cave and the rest of the time just walking through the cave, just getting them through it at a safe pace and then back out. We've tried over the years to get the tour capacity on each tour down, and our visitation has dropped over the years. It's coming back up some now, but it did drop over for a few years. That's helped—actually for about ten years it's dropped. That's helped us kinda make it more manageable. We're not really turning people away so much, and we didn't really turn anybody away back then we just had huge cave tours.

[00:13:55]

BB: So we started this thread by talking about you two being married and you started out as a seasonal and he started was a seasonal. Then we talked about couples and careers and how that has gone and you were using yourselves as an example. He in 79 had gotten...

JL: Yeah, in 79 David got basically got that three way split position, and I got the next summer in 80 I got a seasonal position on the guide force. By then we were pretty much seeing each other. 1981 in January I was still working seasonally. I was offered a permanent position with the personal office at Mammoth Cave because I had taken a clerk typist test down in Nash—I think it was down in Nashville, I had to go take it, and it—maybe in Bowling Green, I cant remember. Anyway, I took the test and I scored really high on it. That English major came into play I guess. I was offered a permanent position as a clerk typist in the Mammoth Cave personnel office. With that I wound up staying for about eight months and another position came up working as supervisor in the ticket office so I took that in August. David and I got married in September of 1981. We got married at the Mammoth Cave Baptist Church September 5<sup>th</sup> 1981. At that time he was still working but he was law enforcement only by then and resource management. We lived across the river in the park at maple springs which was the Northside—north district ranger station. At that point it wasn't really a working ranger station it was our house. That's where we lived from September of 81 until January of 86 and we moved here to Park City in 86. We moved here yeah because David in 1985 decided to leave the National Park Service, our dual career, and go to work for the Postal Service and he immediately made more money an hour. That's kinda were that went. I stayed with the park and he went to work for the Post Office.

[00:16:54]

BB: So you talk about dual careers, your experience seeing it, I'm sure it goes many different ways...some people they meet in the park. Can you talk to about some rise through the ranks, and informally you're talking to the current superintendent how her life had to be with her [?] as they grew in the ranks. That's interesting to me also—children following in footsteps or not. Are you—are you tired?

JL: I'm fine. I'm fine. A number of times in the park service children will follow in the footsteps because they move from park to park. That's the lifestyle that the kids know, and not everybody moves from park to park, obviously we didn't, but parent's interests and their own values tend to rub off on the kids. Then a lot of children growing up with park service parents know that lifestyle and they like it or enjoy it. So, some of them choose to follow in their parents footsteps or they get the same interests like our daughters are both interested in historic preservation and folk studies/folklore. Our older daughter just recently got her master's degree at Western

Kentucky University in folk studies, and our younger daughter is interested in—well anything with animals pretty much, but she's really interested in antiquarian things especially books. So she's interested in studying vintage books and protecting the written word I guess. Yeah. That does happen where the kids fall in their footsteps. Another thing that happens too is employees of the National Park Service have kids who know about opportunities with the National Park Service, like if you're in college you know how to apply for the jobs because your parents know how to apply for the jobs. It's just like if you have family members who are union members, like the mill wrights, plumbers local or whatever, they know what you have to do or who you have to talk too to get into something like that so the same thing happens with the park service. We just know. You don't have to beat the bushes and go try to find out how to get hired. You already know what papers to fill out and where to find them and who to talk too. So that helps to some degree, but you also run into the fact that nepotism is not allowed in the park service. You know, you can't supervise your family members so that can come back to bite you too. A lot of times people that are second or third generation park service will be working in another park. They just got to work somewhere else in the park service or as a seasonal somewhere.

[00:20:25]

BB: And then they have to do the long distance?

JL: Right. Well from their parents or—they don't seem to mind. Part of it is I think that it's nice to be out on your own away from the folks at your own national park working, having your own life, start up, meeting your own friends and your own circle of support in the park service.

BB: Yet you probably have got that common park language that you use

JL: Oh yeah. The language doesn't change much from park to park, not at all.

[00:21:07]

BB: I suppose maybe a parent might have a long-time colleague friend who works at another park and could they say, "hey can you help little Johnny..."

JL: Well you can ask but most of us don't tend to do that. We don't like to do that.

BB: That would be [?]?

JL: Well it's—you don't want to put your child or your friend in that position to have to say yes or no to it, and then especially you want your child to take care of themselves and learn how to do it on their own. Plus, you want them to do a good job. That would be embarrassing if you asked someone to give your child a job and they just didn't show up, just didn't make it work. Although I'm not going to say that people haven't done that. People—some people have I'm sure. We don't tend to do it much around...there are some of the family members working over at the park right now. Their kids, but they're good applicants. They tend to know what it's all about. Get the job done.

[00:22:30]

[End of Track 2]

[00:00:00]

[Track 3]

**BB:** So you're talking about the ologist's and professionalization or science taking maybe more of a role rather than simply just cave tours and that sort of thing. What scientific disciplines were kind of the first ones and where's it going today I mean is it?

**JL:** Well for one thing...

**BB:** Climate change?

**JL:** Yeah. Yeah. with climate change and everything else... One thing that started happening in the 80's was they started giving these special emphasis years like one was 'year of the child', I think another one was 'year of iriquality' [I believe she meant 'year of inequality'] or whatever—reality special emphasis—things coming down the pike. It was becoming more and more apparent that at this park and others that there was not enough base line information being brought to the forefront to be able to tell what sort of changes were happening within parks. What is the health report card for this national park? So, what started happening was at Mammoth Cave for instance, we started—the superintendent started taking vacant positions, maybe an office position or maybe a guide position and turning that into a position that would be used for a science specialist like a hydrologist, a botanist or an air quality specialist. Gradually what was happening was when Dave Mahallock came in as our superintendent in the late 1980's, one of the things he did was, he started putting together a totally new department, a new division within the park and pulling the resources management tasks away from law enforcement and putting it into a specialty group of educated scientists. Gradually over the years that group built and now we have a division of sciences and resource management. They go out study, collect, document and record anything on the surface of the park, with the river and in the cave. Now we're much more ready to tell tax payers and our government leaders just what the health of the park is and what it isn't. That's something that changed twenty something years ago when they started bringing in folks that were actually educated in those tasks and in that type of research and we got credibility in the field. Now we have a number of people in the park who are specialists whether with the cave like a—we actually have one who's a cave specialist. We have someone else who deals—who really knows aquatic life, someone who deals with forestry, you know, trees and reintroducing different types of species. We have people that deal with exotic species trying to get rid of exotics in the park. I can't begin to tell you all the things that they do now. We also have someone who, part time I guess you would say, archivist which we didn't have before—Terry Langford who actually comes to us from Western Kentucky University in a partnership with them. She takes care of our collection which is housed at the resource management offices. So that's kind of where that's gone, and then in the mean time we had a cultural resources specialist, Bob Ward, who worked at the park for many years. Bob recently retired about three years ago. Maybe two years ago. Anyway, Bob's position is vacant now. He went on to be the division chief for sciences and resources management. That's what he was before he retired. Now we don't

really have a cultural resources specialist at the park. So, some of us at the park were kind of throwing in together to try and make that continue to happen with the park and with some of our partnerships that we have with other cultural—you know, other people like the SHPO and State Historic Preservation Office and other groups within the state of Kentucky and the park service—cultural groups like that. The guides started in the 80's, and honestly I was one of the first probably. The guides started conducting our own research which tended to be mostly related to the cave, past tours, past visitors, past guides, the old hotel, saltpeter, African American history all those sorts of things because we were looking for answers that we weren't finding on tours or from each other and realized that those answers had to be out there somewhere. I for instance started heading off to courthouses like the Edmonson County Courthouse looking up information specific to guides from the 19<sup>th</sup> century—looking at their old marriage licenses, anything in newspapers, anything in obituaries and anything that would give me any information on any of the names that I was familiar with, like Mike Bransford, Steven Bishop, Nick Bransford, others and Will Garvin, Will Bransford—just all these names that I was seeing in the cave on the cave walls. They were graffiti from early guides. I didn't know who they were. I knew a little bit about some of them, but I wanted to know more about them. Once I started doing that they became real flesh and blood to me. I started finding photographs, identifying them and learning more about their family connections, their own family trees basically. I was just really-really caught up in trying to tell their story—putting them in context with the time period and with the visitors who were coming to the cave back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There were a lot of wealthy folks coming and they were writing all these travel journals, travel logs, all these letters home about what they saw at Mammoth Cave and how bad the roads were, what the rooms were like and they were describing the cave tours in great detail. Some things I was finding had to deal with Civil War and soldiers who had been at Mammoth Cave or who were camped close by. So there was just so many more stories that had never been told that we were picking up and finding and sharing on our tours. We wound up finding out that we started listening to each other more on tours. Each of us wanted to be that person who brought something new to the cave that week who found something new. It wasn't about the same old same old stories anymore. It was about people, detail, being able to tell stories in a more personal way and making connections with the visitors in a more personal way than with just jokes and silliness that so many of the guides carried on with that we learned from. I'm not saying that people don't sometimes make silly jokes, they do, but it's not the begin-all end-all like it once was. Now they try to make people care about the park, about the cave and try to make them share our own sense of stewardship and our own feelings that the cave and the park are important, worth saving, worth caring about and worth our tax dollars.

[00:10:11]

BB: I was thinking about you talking about early guides and well the hole...

JL: Oh, my bra incident?

BB: but, also just being able I got it up there, I got it up there. I can see what you were just speaking about being involved in telling these little bit more complex cultural stories and maybe trying to one up each other—'I got a new tidbit'. It's almost the same kind of competitiveness

**JL:** It is. It is, but we're eager to share with each other. Everybody shares their news. Now with email and all that we can send—share with each other so easily. You can type something up or share a photograph and all of a sudden fifty people have it now instead of just yourself and it's great. It happens all the time. People wind up kind of picking their own topic of favor like one person might be studying or looking into the whole possibility of the John Houchins story and the bear legacy/legend, which I see as just a legend, but others think it's possible. It's not a competition that way. It's not I'm right, you're wrong, it's about bringing the information to the table and being able to have an intelligent discussion about it, and there are a lot of discussions about such things.  
[00:11:53]

**BB:** And they happen?

**JL:** In the guide lounge, at dinner, around the fire at Seasonals. They can come up anywhere or anytime—the discussions—anywhere—bathroom.

**BB:** Cause their so [?] for it.

**JL:** Really. Seriously, that's exactly right. They really care about and its funny the new seasonals coming in they know what their job is and they know they only get so much time for a break. They aren't so willing to push their break time as some of the older ones are. You can tell when they're in the guides lounge and their breaks about over. A couple guys are—people are telling stories or sharing information about some new research and you can just see them slowly grab their hat and then they'll stand there for a while holding the hat knowing they need to be out to get to the information desk or whatever. Then they'll take a couple steps away. They'll still stand there and listen. Then they'll take another step because they don't want to leave the conversation. People love sharing that information with each other and learning. They all want to know it and they want to know it all. They're working hard at it. I'm proud of them. I'm really proud of where we are now.

[00:13:23]

**BB:** And you helped to make it happen.

**JL:** I hope so. I like to think that I had a little bit to do with it.

**BB:** Absolutely. It's gotta be satisfying. I mean really!

**JL:** It is. It has been very satisfying working with some of the best people I could have ever asked to work with. Of course I hired most of them—a lot of them—not all of them, but a lot of them. They're really good people. That's one thing I've been blessed with, a wonderful place to work and a wonderful group of people to work with. I couldn't have asked for better.

[00:14:08]

**BB:** That's good. What else you want to tell me about?

**JL: I think that's about it for now.**

**BB: Ok. Thanks**

**JL: Your welcome.**

**[00:14:19]**

**[End of Track 3]**